



# Transitioning to Real Foods

Easy steps! You can start anywhere and go as fast or as slow as you want to improve what your family eats.

By Linda J Fels, NTP\*

**MAKING CHOICES:** Everyday our food choices not only affect our health, our pocketbook, and our environment but can also reflect our values. Choosing real foods is activism at the personal level yet it affects national and global issues.

Do you want to improve what you and your family eat? Does it seem that everyone has a different opinion of what is best to eat? Who to believe? I follow the Weston A Price Foundation (there is a local Bellingham, WA chapter!) which publishes a list of 20 dietary guidelines - see below. The list boils down to a diet of whole foods that are nutrient dense and properly prepared. It's a great list but where to begin?

This E-book is designed to give you the tools for making the transition. In this age of industrialized, processed food products, deciding where to start can be daunting. I've divided our food decisions into eight categories. **You can start anywhere and proceed at your own pace.** I recommend going SLOWLY to give yourself time to incorporate the changes into your daily routine so they stick.

Under each category, I list three steps. **Step 1** is something to add while **step 2** asks you to give something up. **Step 3** involves improving the quality of that food category. These steps are in order of difficulty, with step 1 being the easiest. You can stay in one category working your way through the steps or try step 1 in all categories before moving to step 2. At the end of this E-book, you can print a one-page checklist of all the steps. You can post it on your refrigerator to track your progress.

To increase your level of success, under each category look for Money Saving Tips **[Tips]**, Handy Tricks **[Trick]** and Trades or Swaps **[Trade]**.

At the end of each section I give suggestions for where to go for more information – a book to read and links to one article and one website. Transitioning to Real Foods can be challenging but also fun and DELICIOUS!

\* A quick note about me: I was certified as a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner (NTP) in 2012 and began a private practice shortly thereafter. I also received certifications as a GAPS Practitioner (GAPS = Gut And Psychology Syndrome) and as a Level 1 Restorative Wellness Practitioner. By the end of 2019 I will have retired from seeing private clients but plan to continue teaching about healthy lifestyle choices in some capacity. This E-book is one such teaching tool.

## WAPF Dietary Guidelines

The following are the dietary guidelines of the Weston A Price Foundation:

1. Eat whole, unprocessed foods.
2. Eat beef, lamb, game, organ meats, poultry and eggs from pasture-fed animals.
3. Eat wild fish (not farm-raised), fish eggs and shellfish from unpolluted waters.
4. Eat full-fat milk products from pasture-fed cows, preferably raw and/or fermented, such as raw milk, whole yogurt, kefir,



For more on the  
Weston A Price  
Foundation, check out  
[www.westonaprice.org](http://www.westonaprice.org)

cultured butter, full-fat raw cheeses and fresh and sour cream.

5. Use animal fats, such as lard, tallow, egg yolks, cream and butter liberally.
6. Use only traditional vegetable oils—extra virgin olive oil, expeller-expressed sesame oil, small amounts of expeller-expressed flax oil, and the tropical oils—coconut oil, palm oil and palm kernel oil.
7. Take cod liver oil regularly to provide at least 10,000 IU vitamin A and 1,000 IU vitamin D per day.
8. Eat fresh fruits and vegetables, preferably organic. Use vegetables in salads and soups, or lightly steamed with butter.
9. Use whole grains, legumes and nuts that have been prepared by soaking, sprouting or sour leavening to neutralize phytic acid, enzyme inhibitors and other anti-nutrients.
10. Include enzyme-rich lacto-fermented vegetables, fruits, beverages and condiments in your diet on a regular basis.
11. Prepare homemade stocks from the bones of pastured chicken, beef and lamb fed non-GMO feed, and wild fish, and use liberally in soups, stews, gravies and sauces.
12. Use filtered water for cooking and drinking.
13. Use unrefined salt and a variety of herbs and spices for food interest and appetite stimulation.
14. Make your own salad dressing using raw vinegar, extra virgin olive oil and a small amount of expeller-expressed flax oil.
15. Use traditional sweeteners in moderation, such as raw honey, maple syrup, maple sugar, date sugar, dehydrated cane sugar juice (sold as Rapadura) and stevia powder.
16. Use only unpasteurized wine or beer in strict moderation with meals.
17. Cook only in stainless steel, cast iron, glass or good quality enamel.

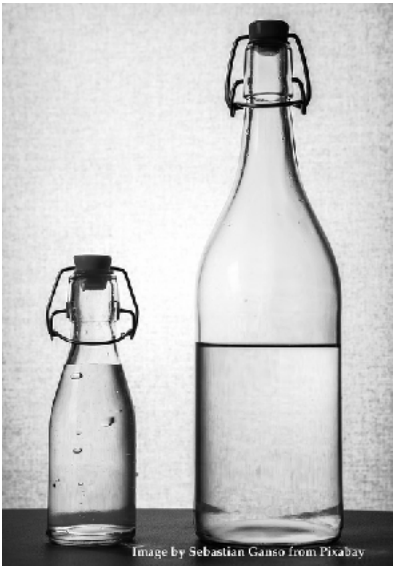
18. Use only natural, food-based supplements.
19. Get plenty of sleep, exercise and natural light.
20. Think positive thoughts and practice forgiveness.

## Section 1 - Water & Beverages

### Step #1: DRINK MORE WATER

Why? Water is the most important and abundant nutrient in our bodies. It is vital for transporting nutrients and flushing out wastes and toxins. It cushions, lubricates, moistens and hydrates our cells and organs. And unfortunately, it is the most common nutrient deficiency in the American population.

How? The recommended daily amount of water to drink is equal to half your body weight in ounces. So if you weigh 130 pounds, your water intake recommendation is 65 ounces, or just over 2 quarts. The maximum amount, no matter your weight is about a gallon (128 ounces). What if you don't drink anywhere near that amount? Begin by adding one glass per day for the first week. Then increase again until you reach your optimal level. If you are having trouble retaining water, try adding a pinch of unrefined sea salt to your water. This gives you some electrolytes (minerals) to assist in absorbing the water into your cells.



**[TRICK]** Drink water when you are hungry, as hunger pangs can frequently be thirst signals.

### Step #2: REDUCE CONSUMPTION OF “JUNK” BEVERAGES

Why? Those beverages that act as diuretics or are loaded with sugar or artificial sweeteners are to be avoided. Diuretics pull more water out of your body than they contain. For every 8 ounce glass of a diuretic beverage, you need to drink 12 – 16 ounces of water just to keep up. Early signs of dehydration include fatigue, headaches, cramps and anxiety. Chronic dehydration can lead to heartburn, constipation, joint pain, migraines and even death.

Beverages that contain lots of sugar dump huge amounts of sugar into our bodies causing insulin spikes. Those containing artificial sweeteners are even worse as most artificial sweeteners are neurotoxins - they are toxic to our brains.

How? First you need to identify what are the diuretic beverages. Alcoholic beverages top the list. Unlike what we thought in the past, coffee and tea are only mild diuretics and can count toward your daily water intake. Soda pop and packaged fruit juices (either sweetened with sugar or artificial sweeteners) are also to be avoided.

**[TRADE]** If you are looking to add more water to your daily intake, consider fresh fruits and vegetables. Many are quite high in water content and do count toward your total.

### **Step #3: IMPROVE YOUR WATER QUALITY**

Why? In many towns and cities the quality of the tap water has decreased and the amount of chemicals added has increased. Bottled water may not be any better depending on the source and is quite expensive and environmentally unfriendly. To learn more, check out The Story of Bottled Water video.

How? You need to do your research. First check on the current quality of your water. Do you have a well? Have it tested. City water? Check with your local water department.

If your water has fluoride added, you need to find a filtering system that removes it; many cannot. Learn more about the dangers of fluoride with this video: Our Daily Dose.

If your water needs to be filtered, buy the best you can afford. For more information, see www.WaterFilterComparisons.com.

**[TIP]** Home filtered tap water can be of higher quality and lower cost than bottled water. And is certainly less expensive than nutrient poor diuretic beverages.

### **READY FOR MORE?**

**Book:** “Your Body's Many Cries for Water” by F. Batmanghelidj, MD (available in Whatcom County Libraries)

**Online Article:** “Who Needs Soda Pop with these Bodacious Beverages” by Jen Allbritton, CN

**Website:** Fluoride Action Network



## Section 2 - Fats & Oils

### Step #1: ADD GOOD FATS

Why? Fats are a much maligned macronutrient yet are essential for good health. They are our long burning source of energy and the preferred fuel for the heart. Fats make up our cell membranes; they are required for absorption of fat-soluble vitamins like A, D, E and K; they prevent energy swings by slowing the absorption of food; and they are key in the anti-inflammatory process. Plus they make food taste good!



Image by Dagny Walter from Pixabay

How? We need a balance of good fatty acids in our bodies. That means a variety of fats and oils, some saturated, some monounsaturated and a small but essential amount of polyunsaturated. If you are going to be heating the oil – such as sautéing or baking, use the stable saturated fats that can withstand the heat. These include animal fats like butter or tallow and tropical oils like coconut oil. In salad dressings and low-heat cooking use mono-unsaturated fats like extra-virgin olive oil and avocados. Save the essential polyunsaturated oils such as cold-pressed seed and nut oils for unheated uses like snacking on nuts or for salads.

**[TIP]** If you have access to pasture-raised organic, nitrate-free bacon, SAVE the bacon grease. Just start a jar and keep in the refrigerator. Makes an excellent fat for sautéing eggs or vegetables. Bacon grease is simply cured lard, which contains a huge amount of the same mono-unsaturated fat as olive oil.

### Step #2: AVOID TRANS FATS & HIGHLY PROCESSED OILS

Why? The way a polyunsaturated fat is processed determines if it acts as a nutrient in your body or as a toxin. Most polyunsaturated “vegetable” oils like soy, canola, sunflower, safflower and cottonseed are processed at very high temperatures and pressures rendering them rancid. Yes, they are then deodorized and bleached. By removing them from their seed, the protective antioxidants which protect them from becoming rancid are removed.

Trans fats are processed even further by forcing additional hydrogen molecules into the oil. This makes the oil solid resembling saturated animal fats but they act very differently in your body. They interfere with the anti-inflammatory process, disrupts cholesterol levels balance, and significantly lowers visual acuity in infants.

How? Buy only cold pressed vegetable oils, keep them refrigerated and NEVER heat them. Avoid anything listing “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” oil as an ingredient. That tells you it contains trans fats. Due to labeling loopholes, these can still say zero trans fats on the nutritional label. **To be sure check the ingredient listing!**

**[TRADE]** When recipes ask for shortening, use butter or coconut oil. They each give a different distinctive taste to the recipe, so it is wise to keep both on hand.

### **Step #3: BUY QUALITY FATS & OILS**

Why? Your choice of fats and oil affects more than just your health; it affects our environment too. Conventional seed oil crops are doused with pesticides, herbicides and artificial fertilizers. Genetic engineering to make crops resistant to herbicides is also creating super weeds that are also resistant to herbicides. Then these seed oils are highly processed, bleached and deodorized. Many meat animals are raised in horrible industrial style factory conditions. Toxins accumulate in animal fats when fed with pesticide laden and/or genetically engineered corn or soy plus other feed additives.

How? **Buy the best quality fats & oils that you can afford.** Organic is better than conventional. If you can buy lard or butter directly from a farmer who takes care to raise the animals without toxins, even better. Buy organic cold-pressed vegetable or seed oils.

**[TIP]** So much soy, canola, cottonseed and corn is now genetically modified. By avoiding any foods containing them, you lower your food bill because you are avoiding most high profit low nutrient processed foods. Quality really counts when it comes to fats!



## READY FOR MORE?



**Book:** "Eat Fat, Lose Fat" by Mary Enig & Sally Fallon (good introduction to cooking with coconut and coconut oil; available in Whatcom County Library System)

**Online Article:** [How to Render Lard](#) (one of many recipes to be found online)

**Website:** [Know Your Fats section on WAPF website](#) (45+ articles listed)

## Section 3 - Seed-based Foods

*This section covers seeds, grains, nuts and beans.*

### **Step #1: ADD MORE SEEDS AND NUTS**

Why? Unlike highly processed seed and nut oils, the whole seed or nut is loaded with essential fats and minerals along with fiber, antioxidants, some protein, Vitamin E and several B vitamins. The antioxidants protect the delicate polyunsaturated fats from becoming rancid. The fats, fiber and protein make them a good filling snack.



Image by Anna Nielsen from Pixabay

How? Try to buy the best quality you can afford. Buy as fresh as possible; refrigerated is best. Organic is preferred. Start with raw seeds and nuts, soak them overnight in salted water, then drain and dehydrate them until crispy. This way they are easier to digest and taste wonderful!

**[TIP]** Save money by getting your minerals via seeds and nuts instead of supplements. Pumpkin seeds are high in zinc; flax seeds are high in magnesium and for manganese choose filberts.

### **Step #2: AVOID MODERN WHEAT**

Why? In the last 50 years, wheat has undergone extensive hybridization to improve yield. Unfortunately its digestibility has gone down. Many people find they are allergic or sensitive to the gluten protein which now exists in a much higher percentage than earlier forms of wheat. Many others react quite strongly to the blood sugar highs and lows experienced when eating wheat products. Meats are frequently accused of acidifying the body yet wheat has a much more dramatic acidifying effect. As more and more people find they have trouble digesting modern wheat products, it can be a wonderful adventure exploring healthy alternatives.

How? My first suggestion is to avoid all highly processed grain products, no matter the grain. They still pack a blood sugar wallop. One way to do that is to make breads and muffins from coconut or almond flour. You will also gain wonderful fats in the process. If you do use other grains like rice or corn, use organic varieties and smaller portions.

**[TRADE]** Instead of switching to highly processed wheat-free or gluten-free products, be adventurous and try alternative whole grains like quinoa, teff, amaranth, buckwheat, corn and for those who can handle gluten try rye, oats, barley and older forms of wheat like spelt and emmer. My favorite is the oldest of the wheats, einkorn which also boasts a high beta-carotene content. **Just remember to practice portion control and ALWAYS buy organic.**

### **Step #3: LEARN TO SOAK, SPROUT & FERMENT**

Why? All seeds protect themselves from early germination with enzyme inhibitors. Unfortunately, if we do not inactivate the enzyme inhibitors we ingest, our own digestive enzymes will be blocked from properly digesting and absorbing the nutrients contained in seeds. This is why traditional cultures learned to soak and dehydrate or sprout or sourdough ferment their seed foods like grains, nuts, beans and seeds.

How? Here are a couple of good places to start. Instead of canned beans, buy dried beans and soak them and cook from scratch. See how much better they taste. Buy raw nuts, soak them in salted water overnight and dehydrate until crispy. You can use your oven at its lowest setting or a dehydrator. Buy sprouted or sourdough breads from a local bakery. Or better yet, learn to make sourdough bread yourself.

### **READY FOR MORE?**

**Book:** “Wheat Belly” by William Davis, MD (available in the Whatcom County Library System)

**Online article:** “Proper Preparation of Grains and Legumes” video by Sarah Pope

**Website:** Jovial Foods einkorn recipes



## Section 4 - Vegetables

### Step #1: ADD MORE COLORS TO YOUR VEGETABLE PALETTE

Why? Everyone has heard how important it is to eat more vegetables. If you currently eat only a few vegetables, the easiest way to improve your overall phytonutrient intake is to add more variety instead of just increasing the quantity of the same ones. Vegetables contain many vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Eating a variety of colors insures you are getting the best variety of these nutrients.



How? Look at your plate now. How many colors does it contain? What is missing? Do you need more green? How about some greens like Swiss chard, beet greens, spinach or even kale? Want more orange or red? Try beets which come in a range of colors. Even expand your potato repertoire with purple potatoes or yams.

**[TIP]** Buy what is in season. This is a good way to get the best price and the produce is likely to be transported from a nearby farm. In the winter, try root vegetables like turnips or rutabagas. In the summer, try local summer squashes, lettuce greens and snap peas.

### Step #2: STOP EATING OVERLY PROCESSED VEGETABLES

Why? Many vitamins are easily destroyed with too much heat. The more processing, the less nutrients. This does not mean you need to eat everything raw. Some nutrients are more readily available when vegetables are lightly cooked.

How? Limit the amount of canned vegetables and stick to fresh or frozen. When it comes to fresh, the more local the better. Become a frequent shopper at our local farmer's markets and farm stands or grow your own.

**[TRICK]** To absorb the most nutrients from your vegetables, make sure you eat them with a good fat, like butter or olive oil. Fats also make them taste better – a plus when trying to

convince family members to eat more vegetables.

### **Step #3: BUY ORGANIC WHEN POSSIBLE**

Why? While increasing the amount and variety of vegetables, we do not want to increase our consumption of pesticide residues or encourage greater use of fossil fuel based fertilizers. The best way to do this is to search out organic or biodynamic choices.

How? Farmer's markets are a great place to start. Most groceries also have organic sections. And you can try your hand at growing vegetables too, even if it is one tomato plant on your deck or lettuce on your windowsill.

**[TIP]** For many it is hard to afford to buy all organic. In those instances, use the Environmental Working Group's Shopping Guide to Pesticides in Produce. This list will tell you which fruits and vegetables have the highest pesticide residues. Those with low residues can be purchased conventionally, saving you money. For the EWG's current listing, go to <https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/>.

### **READY FOR MORE?**



**Book:** "Wild Fermentation" by Sandor Ellix Katz (for those ready to try fermented vegetables; available in Whatcom County Library System)

**Online article:** [Bitters: the Revival of a Forgotten Flavor](#) by Danielle Charles-Davies

**Website:** [Bellingham Farmers Market](#)

## Section 5 - Meat & Eggs

### Step #1: ADD FAT WITH YOUR PROTEIN

Why? Vitamins A, D and K are found in animal fat, because you need fats to absorb these vitamins. And these vitamins are in turn needed to assimilate protein. Fats also help muscle meats stay moist. With fattier cuts and organ meats, you do not have to add fat to your protein, the fat usually already comes attached.



How? Let's retire the idea that a baked skinless chicken breast with no added fat is a good idea. Try the fattier and usually cheaper cuts like chicken thighs, chuck roast and pork shoulder. If you are using a lean cut, cook it with butter or coconut oil or add a sauce. You may find you enjoy meats more with a little added fat.

**[TIP]** Stretch lean cuts of meat by slicing them very thin, sauté in a healthy fat and add lots of vegetables. Adding a cream sauce is another alternative.

### Step #2: GIVE UP CAFO MEATS

Why? One of the biggest tragedies of our food supply is the way animals are raised in deplorable conditions, being fed GMO corn and soy plus waste products like bakery waste and pesticide laden citrus peel cakes. (CAFO stands for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation) Animals are supposed to live outside eating their appropriate diet. For cows and sheep that is grass. Chickens can supplement by scratching up grubs and seeds. When this happens, the omega -3 content of their fat goes up, their organs (nutritional powerhouses) are safe to eat and their manure is a fertilizer, not a waste management issue.

How? Buy the best quality you can afford. This may mean eating less meat overall but your nutrient density will be high. Organ meats are very nutrient dense and are reasonably priced. Same with eggs from pastured chickens fed organic soy-free feed or fish eggs. Sustainably caught wild seafood is also nutrient dense. Look for local sources.

**[TRADE]** Do you have a source for good quality meat but you must buy at least a half an animal and you don't have a freezer? Find a friend with room in her freezer and trade some of your meat for storage space.

### **Step #3: LEARN TO MAKE YOUR OWN BROTH**

Why? Homemade bone broth is an easy-to-digest nutrient dense staple for every home. It is inexpensive since you use bones and meat scraps you would normally throw away. Bone broth is cooked for a long time and you add vinegar at the beginning to release minerals from the bones into the broth. Meat broth is cooked for few hours and contains more meat. It is even easier to digest than bone broth. Both are so much better than store-bought! They are excellent for someone who is sick or cannot stomach anything else. If you are new to cooking, this is a good place to start.

How? For bone broth, you need a supply of bones. Collect the bones from your meals and store them in a container in the freezer until you have enough for a batch of broth. You can also buy bones from your meat farmer or grocer. For beef and lamb stock, make sure to include some marrow bones. Ask your butcher to split them for you. Next, find a large stockpot or crockpot. There are several recipes available. I recommend Sally Fallon's recipe in her Nourishing Traditions cookbook. The recipe can also be found at [Broth is Beautiful](#).

**[TRICK]** To increase the amount of gelatin in your chicken broth, add chicken feet. If you buy your chicken directly from a local farmer, they may sell feet.

### **READY FOR MORE?**

**Book:** "Make It Paleo" by Bill Staley and Hayley Mason (available in Whatcom County Library System)

**Online article:** [The Chicken: A Brief History of America's Most Consumed Meat](#) By John Moody

**Website:** [Farmer's Footprint](#) (Regenerating 5 million acres of farmland by 2025)



## Section 6 - Dairy Foods

*These section applies only to those who can tolerate at least some dairy. Many people have issues with pasteurized dairy but can use raw dairy. Others tolerate goat or sheep milk better than cow's milk due to the older version of the milk protein they contain.*

### Step #1: ADD FERMENTED FIRST



Why? Yogurt and kefir contain beneficial bacterial strains to populate your intestinal tract. These friendly flora assist with digestion and protect against harmful microorganisms. Fermented dairy is also easier to digest from the standpoint that the food is already partially digested. Lactose levels are low or nonexistent which helps those who cannot break down milk sugar (lactose intolerant).

How? There are many varieties of yogurts on the market. Look for full fat organic brands that state they have live cultures. It is best to buy plain unflavored and add your own fruit and flavorings. This way you can control the amount of sugar. OR make your own yogurt or kefir at home. There are cultures available at local stores and online. This way you will know the quality of the milk being used. Don't use ultra pasteurized; it is so over processed that it won't keep the cultures alive.

**[TIP]** Older varieties of dairy cows like Guernsey produce milk with the older protein (A<sub>2</sub>) and can be tolerated by those who cannot tolerate other cow dairy. Just make sure you go for raw or vat pasteurized milk!

### Step #2: GIVE UP LOW FAT AND NON-FAT DAIRY

Why? You need the fat that naturally comes with milk to digest and assimilate the proteins, to absorb the vitamins and minerals and to feel satiated. Fat-soluble vitamins are in the fat. No fat, no vitamin A, D, E or K. It's that simple. Low fat and non-fat milk usually have added powdered milk which is processed at such high temperatures the proteins are denatured and the cholesterol is oxidized. You do not want to consume either.

How? Again, buy the best quality milk you can afford. Organic at least, preferably from grass fed cows to insure the highest



vitamin, mineral and good fatty acid content. If you now consume non-fat and low fat dairy products, it might take a few days to get used to the creaminess of full fat milk and cheese but your body will thank you for it.

### **Step #3: CONSIDER RAW DAIRY**

Why? Despite the FDA's campaign against raw milk, many Weston A. Price Foundation supporters and their families drink raw milk. Raw milk, as nature intended and as humans have been drinking it for thousands of years, is high in vitamins, contains all 22 essential amino acids, enzymes, probiotics and good fats. Grass fed dairy cows have higher levels of zinc in their milk and their fat is high in vitamins A, D & K as well as conjugated linoleic acid (CLA).

How? Here in Bellingham, WA we are blessed to have access to both raw cow's milk and raw goat's milk. Check out our Resources page on [BellinghamRealFood.com](http://BellinghamRealFood.com) for more details.

### **READY FOR MORE?**



**Book:** "The Untold Story of Milk" by Ron Schmid, ND  
(available in Whatcom County Library System)

**Online article:** Fresh, Unprocessed (Raw) Whole Milk: Safety, Health and Economic Issues by The Weston A. Price Foundation

**Website:** Raw Milk Institute

## Section 7 - Fruits & Sweets

### Step #1: CHOOSE STRONGER TASTING SWEETENERS



Why? All sweeteners can cause spikes in blood sugar (unless you enter the suspect world of artificial sweeteners; read the article [“Sugar-Free Blues: Everything You Wanted to Know About Artificial Sweeteners”](#) if you are tempted). Using stronger tasting sweeteners allows you to reduce the amount and still feel satisfied. These usually contain minerals, enzymes and vitamins too.

How? Examples of stronger tasting sweeteners include molasses, darker honeys, evaporated cane juice (Sucanat and Rapadura), real maple syrup and pureed fruit.

**[TRADE]** Sometimes adding more vanilla or cinnamon or other flavorings can help when reducing the amount of sweetener.

### Step #2: MORE WHOLE FRUIT, LESS JUICE

Why? Whole fruits contain sugars, vitamins and minerals plus fiber. Juices are much more concentrated and have much of the fiber removed. This makes juice a high sugar food. It is quite easy to drink the equivalent of 3 apples in a glass of juice but much harder to eat those 3 apples in one sitting. Fiber fills you up and slows down digestion. If you make fresh vegetables juices, it is okay to add some fruit just not too much.

How? Drink Water, Chew Fruit. It's that simple. While transitioning, you can try diluting your juice with water.

**[TIP]** Buy fruit that is in season. So in the middle of summer, eat peaches and plums, not apples. Apples and pears in the fall. Strawberries in late spring. In late winter, enjoy berries out of the freezer.

### **Step #3: DESSERTS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE SPECIAL**

Why? We all know there is an epidemic of diabetes and obesity in this country. Some of it is related to the average 196 pounds of sugar per person eaten each year. That comes to a half a pound a day! Our bodies do not handle this much sugar well. They are designed to store sugar as fat during the good times like when the berries are ripe so we have enough fat to survive the lean times, like winter. Yet today there is too much food all the time. And much of that is of such low quality, our bodies crave more. What we are really craving are more vitamins, more protein, more fatty acids, and more minerals.

How? For many giving up all sweets is a real struggle. Do you have dessert every night? Need something sweet after every meal? Try these techniques: Improve the quality of your treats while having them less often. Make them special! Eat more custards made with whole milk and lots of eggs. Make fruit desserts and put in half the recommended amount of sweetener but increase the fat. Then next time, put in even less sweetener. Use almond or coconut flour instead of grain based flours. Eat a small amount of low sugar dark chocolate and let it slowly dissolve in your mouth.

### **READY FOR MORE?**

**Book:** "Get the Sugar Out" by Ann Louise Gittleman, PhD, CNS (501 simple ways to cut the sugar out of any diet; available in Whatcom County Library System)

**Online article:** [Zapping Sugar Cravings](#) by Jen Allbritton, CN

**Website:** [Julia Ross Cures](#) (a pioneer in the use of nutrient therapies to target food cravings and problems related to mood, sleep, and addiction.) Bonus: her books are also available in the Whatcom County Library System!



## Section 8 - Eating Habits

### Step #1: CHEW SLOWLY AND THOROUGHLY



Why? Digestion begins in your mouth. The more you chew, the less work for your stomach. Your saliva contains an enzyme that begins the digestion of carbohydrates (sugars and starches). So the more you chew, the more those foods are already partially digested. Slowing down and enjoying your meal, helps keep your body in a parasympathetic mode which is the digestion mode. Rushing through your meal and jumping up to tackle the next thing on your schedule switches you into sympathetic mode and turns OFF digestion. Why eat if you aren't going to let your body digest?

How? Some people like to count how many times they chew. I simply have learned to put down my fork between bites. Just that one act doubles the number of times you chew your food. Find pleasant people to share your meal. Savor every bite and taste sensation. By following this transition to real food, you have been improving the quality of your food so it should be tasting better.

**[TRADE]** Trade in your large plate and dinner fork for a salad plate and fork. You will be starting with a smaller amount of food. Chew it slowly and then you have to get up to fill your plate again. This will slow you down and maybe you will decide you really don't need that second helping.

### Step #2: DON'T EAT 3 HOURS BEFORE BEDTIME

Why? Give your body a good rest from digestion. By not eating after dinner until breakfast the next morning, you are giving your body an opportunity to do some daily maintenance while you sleep. If you eat just before bed, digestion is what your body will be doing instead of detoxing and housekeeping. Some people find that they can lose weight just by sticking to this habit.

How? One key to success is eating dinner at a decent hour. Are you the type that is so busy that you eat dinner just before bed? Examine why. Can you push it back one hour and then two?

Another key is eating enough at dinner so you don't have the munchies all night. Eating enough protein and fat helps with this. Lots of vegetables help too. Then leave the kitchen. Do something that interests you so you don't think about snacking.

**[TRICK] Time Restricted Eating** can help with sugar cravings. Begin with going 12 hours without eating, say 7 pm to 7 am. Then increase the hours you do not eat slowly up to 14 or even 16. You will find once you are used to not eating for several hours, you can more easily give up sweets.

**One more trick:** Keeping your hands busy is a great trick. Take up knitting or cross-stitch or even jigsaw puzzles.

### **Step #3: LEARN TO COOK**

Why? Learning to cook is the best and maybe only way to successfully cut your ties to the industrial processed food system. Healthy eating means knowing not only how to buy or grow your food but also how to prepare it. Cooking is a skill that rewards you daily and can become a real pleasure. For many cooks, it is their creative outlet.

How? Start small. Pick a favorite food or one you eat often. Find classes nearby. There are many offered throughout Bellingham and Whatcom county. Ask a friend to teach you one dish. Try the Nourishing Traditions cookbook listed below.

**[TIP]** Get a free cooking class by asking a friend who is a good cook and offering to pay for all the ingredients.

### **READY FOR MORE?**

**Book:** "Nourishing Traditions" by Sally Fallon (a must-have cookbook for the properly prepared nutrient dense whole food kitchen; available in Whatcom County Library System)

**Online article:** (not an article but series of videos instead): Beginner Videos section of Weston A Price Foundation site

**Website:** My Circadian Clock (lots if info on Time Restricted Eating and its benefits)



## TRANSITIONING TO REAL FOODS

✓ with Date	<b>WATER &amp; OTHER BEVERAGES</b>
	1. Drink More Water
	2. Reduce Consumption of “Junk” Beverages
	3. Improve Water Quality
✓ with Date	<b>FATS &amp; OILS</b>
	1. Add Good Fats
	2. Avoid Trans Fats & Highly Processed Oils
	3. Buy Quality Fats & Oils
✓ with Date	<b>SEEDS, GRAINS, NUTS &amp; BEANS</b>
	1. Add More Seeds & Nuts
	2. Avoid Modern Wheat
	3. Learn to Soak, Sprout & Ferment
✓ with Date	<b>VEGETABLES &amp; MORE VEGETABLES</b>
	1. Add More Colors to Your Vegetable Palette
	2. Stop Eating Overly Processed Vegetables
	3. Buy Organic When Possible
✓ with Date	<b>MEATS &amp; EGGS</b>
	1. Add Fat With Your Protein
	2. Give Up CAFO Meats
	3. Learn to Make Bone Broth
✓ with Date	<b>DAIRY FOODS</b>
	1. Add Fermented First
	2. Give Up Low Fat & Non Fat Dairy
	3. Consider Raw Dairy
✓ with Date	<b>FRUITS &amp; SWEETS</b>
	1. Choose Stronger Tasting Sweeteners
	2. More Whole Fruit, Less Juice
	3. Desserts Are Supposed to be Special
✓ with Date	<b>EATING HABITS</b>
	1. Chew Slowly & Thoroughly
	2. Don't Eat 3 Hours Before Bedtime
	3. Learn To Cook

*Post to your refrigerator to track your progress*